



March Platforms

This Season's Platform Theme is *The Heart of Ethical Culture: Faith in All People; Eliciting the Best from Ourselves and Others*. Following the themes of community, social action, and personal journey, we will offer opportunities to engage with the community in new ways throughout the year.

March 2: *When You Strike a Woman, You Have Struck a Rock*

Woman, not as victim, but as familymaker, farmer/food producer, mother, nationbuilder, healer — a mighty force in the reconstruction and healing of torn society — is the “foundational” perspective of the African women's movement. What are some critical differences between “Western” and “Southern” feminism, and the “rock” of grassroots women and their organizations around the world? BSEC Leader Lisel Burns will preside, with guests such as Achola Pala-Okeyo of GROOTS International, Kali Ndoye of the Fifth Avenue Committee, and Jan Peterson of the UN Huairou Commission, sharing their perspectives.

March 9: *Intergenerational Storytelling*

Join the students of the Children's Sunday Assembly and CSA Director Tracey Jindyeh as they explore traditional stories, and how they relate to the lives of children and grownups. Alternatively: Join BSEC's delegation to the New York Society for Ethical Culture at 11:30am, when *The Ethical Humanist Award* will be presented to Senator Jim Jeffords, for having the moral courage to do his part in affecting the balance of power in Washington.

March 16: *Housewives & Activists: The National Women's Conference in the 1930s and 1940s*

Based on letters and clippings preserved in the BSEC archives, we will look at the organization that offered Ethical Culture's version of what other groups often called Women's Auxiliaries or Ladies' Aid Societies. Women from individual Ethical Societies formed Women's Conferences and met annually, when possible, in the National Women's Conference. They offered considered opinion and elbow grease work for causes ranging from world peace initiatives to a residence club for elderly members. This organization played an important role in the shaping of Ethical Culture and continues today under the name National Service Conference. With BSEC Member and historian Martha Hoffman.

March 23: *How Much Is Good Enough?*

Some faith traditions root their authenticity, and base their practices, on authoritative texts, regardless of their historical accuracy. Ethical Culture faith rests on a combined study of philosophy, ethics and science. From whence come our religious authenticity and authority? On what basis do we form our traditions and practices? Early Leaders held a faith in moral progress and human perfectibility: The “idea of the perfect” guided all human efforts. What guides us today? Anne Klaeyens, Leader of the Long Island Ethical Humanist Society, returns to BSEC as she examines the shift from an ideal of perfectibility in a rational world to a concept of health and wholeness in a “good enough” environment and asks the question: “How much is ‘good enough’?”

March 30: *Personal, Favorite, and International Poetry*

BSEC devotes a platform each year to the expressive power of language, as Members share their own poetry, or poems that hold great meaning in their lives. The offering is sure to include at least a few international selections. To read your own selection, contact Constance Pigozzi (331-1137), Platform Committee Chair, who will preside.

April 6: *Ethics On the Edge: Communities, Moral Boundaries, and Doing Good*

Embedded in any value system are limitations to those values, where the ideals of a perfect morality come up against the realities of the material world. How do we define these moral boundaries in our own lives? Does it bother us to think that our ideals might have limits? How do we match our personal core values and moral boundaries with those of groups and communities we choose to affiliate ourselves with (or create one if none exist), and agree to hold ourselves accountable to? Join BSEC Leader Lisel Burns for a rich discussion.

Platforms are held every Sunday morning from 11am to 12:15pm in the main hall of the Meeting House at 53 Prospect Park West, followed by a convivial and delicious buffet lunch.

AEU News

The 89th Annual Assembly of the American Ethical Union will be held on Memorial Day Weekend, May 23-26, at the Philadelphia Ethical Society. The theme for this year's Assembly is *Our Common Faith: Building a National Ethical Presence*.

In preparation for the Assembly, the AEU is soliciting and recruiting candidates for its Board of Directors. BSEC Members interested in serving on the AEU Board should submit an application with a brief personal statement, accompanied by the signatures of ten Members of BSEC or any other Ethical Society. The application deadline is April 1st. Much more information online at aeu.org.

Ethical Action News

Brooklyn Tikkun, which is a progressive Jewish-led social change group, which welcomes people of all religious and non-religious backgrounds, is meeting on Sunday, March 9th, 4-6pm at BSEC. The meeting will discuss the group's plans for the future and Rabbi Michael Lerner's book *Healing Israel/Palestine*.

The *Brooklyn Community Action Network* (BCAN) hosted over 50 persons representing 35 peace and social change organizations at BSEC last February 23rd. BCAN's goal is to support organizations through mutual aid and united action. This is the first major effort to unite Brooklyn's diverse community and religious groups since the Brooklyn Ecumenical Cooperatives organizing efforts two decades ago.

BSEC Life & Ethics Series

The BSEC Life & Ethics Series 2003 kicks off on Wednesday March 26 at 7:30pm, as Lisel Burns leads a workshop entitled: *Ethics in Our Lives: A Life of Meaning and Integrity, Compared to What?* Without a baseline, and tools of self assessment, how are we to manage the multitude of choices about lifestyle, quality of life, self-care, and “giving back” to the larger community? The workshop is a practical introduction to ideas and tools for taking these and similar questions seriously.

More Life & Ethics workshops will be announced in the coming weeks. Contact the Leader's Office or check bsec.org for info.

**THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY
FOR ETHICAL CULTURE**

53 PROSPECT PARK WEST
BROOKLYN, NY 11215
(718) 768-2972

BSECOoffice@aol.com
www.bsec.org

Leader: Lisel Burns

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Platform: Constance Pigozzi 331-1137

Special Projects & Communications:

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Sunday School: Tracey Jindyeh 748-7084

Operations Manager: James Alford

Peace Site: Maureen Egginton 216-7532

Coffeehouse: Linda Stallard 768-2972

Environment: Kurt Johnson 768-2972

Youth Group:

Irene Baker, Tony Severo, Eddie Coyne

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Haitian Dance Night

Fri. March 28th, 6-10pm

a Benefit for the

**Children's Sunday Assembly
& Leogane Haiti Projects**

The Children's Sunday Assembly takes over the Good Coffeehouse on Friday, March 28th, for a fun-filled evening featuring Haitian Music and Dancing. Bring your friends and families for supper, then stay for the party and the concert!

Supper is at 6pm, followed by the party at 7pm. From 8-10pm will be the Haitian Dance Concert.

All proceeds from this event will benefit the Children's Sunday Assembly and the Leogane Haiti Projects. Contact CSA Director Tracey Jindyeh (748-7084, or jindyeh@hotmail.com) for info.

MARCH 2003 BSEC CALENDAR

Saturday 3/1

11am: Ethical Action Committee Meeting.

3-6pm: Monthly Life Reflections, at Lisel Burns' house. Call 718-783-2298 for details.

Sunday 3/2

10-10:50am: Yoga Class. Donation \$10, \$8 for BSEC Members.

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *When You Strike a Woman, You Have Struck a Rock* with BSEC Leader Lisel Burns and special guests.

2-4pm: *WILPF Corporate Personhood Study Group*. Contact Lisel Burns or Donna Roberts for more information. Study materials available online, at wilpf.org.

Monday 3/3

7-9pm: *Stone Soup Storytelling Group*, a monthly open workshop for storytellers of all levels of experience. Led by professional storyteller Mary Savage.

Tuesday 3/4

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus* directed by Bev Grant. We believe every woman can sing! Call 718-965-0720 for details.

Wednesday 3/5

7:30pm: *Brooklyn Poets Against the War*, open mike poetry readings in an International Day of Poetry Against the War.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan with J.P. Harpignes. \$13/class; \$40 for 4; BSEC members free.

6:30-10pm: *Pinewoods Folk Open Sing* with potluck supper & snacks.

Friday 3/7

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents a special evening of music curated by Music Matters, featuring performances by *Sweet William* and *Susan Guinn*.

Human Faith Project Retreat, March 7-9

Sunday 3/9

10-10:50am: Yoga Class.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Intergenerational Storytelling* with Tracey Jindyeh and the students of the Children's Sunday Assembly.

4-6pm: Tikkun Brooklyn Meeting.

Tuesday 3/11

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 3/12

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Friday 3/14

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents the pure world music of *DalamDougou*, blending Gypsy fiddle music with West African balafon to create a totally unique sound.

Saturday 3/15

4:30-6pm: Couples Discussion Group: *Making Life Decisions*. Followed by dinner from Coco Roco (\$7) or potluck at 6:30.

Sunday 3/16

10-10:50am: Yoga Class.

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Housewives and Activists: The National Women's Conference in the 1930s and 1940s* with Martha Hoffman.

Tuesday 3/18

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 3/19

7pm: Brooklyn Flix: *Spike of Bensonhurst*.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Friday 3/21

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents Third Fridays with the Park Slope Food Coop: *Caru Thompson* in an evening of spoken word, poetry and music.

Sunday 3/23

11am: Sunday Platform: *How Much Is Good Enough?* with Anne Klaeyesen.

12:30-2pm: Newcomers' Workshop.

Tuesday 3/25

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 3/26

7:30pm: Life & Ethics Workshop: *Ethics in Our Lives*, led by BSEC Leader Lisel Burns.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

Friday 3/28

6-10pm: *Haitian Dance Night* benefit for the Children's Sunday Assembly and Leogane Haiti projects. Supper 6pm, concert & dancing 7-10pm.

Sunday 3/30

10-10:50am: Yoga Class.

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Personal, Favorite, and International Poetry*.

5-7pm: *Corporate Personhood Study Group*.

Tuesday 4/1

7:30-9pm: *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

Wednesday 4/2

7:30pm: Workshop: *Building Beloved Communities*, led by activist and trainer Gwen Braxton.

7-9pm: T'ai Chi Chuan.

6:30-10pm: *Pinewoods Folk Open Sing*.

Friday 4/4

8pm: The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents *New Translations*, featuring Barry Kornhauser on cello and Kyoto Kitamura on vocals.

Saturday 4/5

3-6pm: Monthly Life Reflections.

Sunday 4/6

10-10:50am: Yoga Class.

10am-12:30pm: Children's Sunday Assembly.

11am: Sunday Platform: *Communities, Moral Boundaries, and Doing Good* with BSEC Leader Lisel Burns.

12:30pm: **BSEC Town Meeting.**